



T. B. colony in the highlands of Albuquerque. This colony is on the edge of a mesa, and there is sand, sand everywhere, but it is clean, dry, sand.

PICTURE a community of 25,000 persons, about half of whom are tubercular or have had tuberculosis and been cured or they are there because some member of their family has the disease, and you have Albuquerque, New Mexico, and its environs.

Health department records show that there were 8,000 persons who had the disease in the city last year. Several thousand others were there because their wives or daughters or sons were afflicted. These do not include the several thousand others who went to the city and were cured, or the disease was "arrested," as some physicians prefer to express it. Hundreds and hundreds of the latter class are making the city their permanent home, because they are afraid of a relapse if they return East or to lower altitudes. Many others remained because they like the country. Great numbers of the business and professional men went out to Albuquerque for their health, and after their trouble was "arrested" they remained and entered business there or followed the practice of their profession.

In the East afflicted persons are ashamed to admit it, and as a general thing they are shunned, but not so in Albuquerque. There everybody welcomes them.

As one steps from the train a tubercular taxi driver takes him to a hotel; or if one prefers to ride on a street car he will find a woman, who is supporting a tubercular husband, operating the car. She doesn't hesitate to tell one so either. She seems to take a certain pride in doing a man's work to help her husband.

Then along comes the expressman with your trunk. He always is a friendly sort of a chap.

"Out here for your health?" he queries.

"Yes," you reply.

"Well, you came to a good place; I was T. B., too; weighed only 120 when I came out here, and look at me now," he rattles off.

Everybody is a booster for the town, but when one pins the T. B. specialists right down to brass tacks, they admit that the climate represents only fifteen per cent.

"What does the other eighty-five per cent consist of?" asks the patient.

"Rest, absolute freedom from family and business cares, change of scenery and a strict adherence to the rules we lay down for you," they reply.

"Chasing the cure" is what all T. B. sufferers who go to Albuquerque, or any other place out West, call it. And that is just about what it is. The cure is an elusive object, and many who go to Albuquerque fail to catch up with it, as witness the health report for 1920, which shows that 298 persons died of tuberculosis. Of this number the great majority had been in the city less than a year, proving conclusively that they "chased the cure" there and failed to find it. Of these deaths the greatest number were among persons between 30 and 40 years of age.

The health department points out, however, that some of the persons who died were in the last stages of the disease before they reached the city. It is an absolute fact that some were carried off trains on stretchers.

The two daily newspapers of Albuquerque run a daily obituary column, but never do they mention what a person dies of, unless he or she is killed in an accident. But it isn't difficult to guess that about 60 per cent of the deaths recorded in the papers are caused by T. B., for the story generally ends with, "the body will be sent to his home in Illinois," or whatever the state may be.

How are all these T. B. sufferers housed? Well, there are six fairly large sanatoria in the city, and those who are unable to get around are in those places. And, by the way, some of these institutions always have a waiting list. Others are in rooming houses or private homes. That little statement about Albuquerque welcoming T. B. sufferers with open arms should be amended a little right here. It is true that the city as a municipality welcomes them, but there is something akin to a dead line. The city is split by the depot and yards of the one big railroad entering there. The principal business of the town is on the west side of the railroad, and

## "Chasing the Cure"

By HARVEY W. PATTON

practically all the business and professional people reside on that side of the city. On the east side is what is called the highland district, and here is where all the sanatoria are; also rooming and boarding houses that cater especially to T. B. victims.

Sufferers from T. B. are not wanted as roomers or boarders on the west side at all. There are plenty of rooming and boarding houses in that section, but whenever one of them has rooms to rent the advertisements proclaiming the fact plainly state, "no sick." When a person tries to rent one of these rooms he is cross-examined as to his health, and if he says he isn't working, that about settles it. He doesn't get the room.

Still, if it were not for the health seekers, Albuquerque wouldn't be the town it is today. All the business houses of the west side are mighty glad to get the business of the east side T. B.'s; in fact, they couldn't exist without it. Nevertheless, the T. B.'s are not wanted as boarders or roomers in that side of the city.

The greatest difficulty the several thousand health seekers seem to have is finding ways to kill time; that is, those who are strong enough to be up and around. Not many of them work, because they have been ordered to rest. Even if they were in shape to work there isn't enough employment in the city.

The most popular place for the young men is the White Elephant near beer saloon. They play pitch or solo there all day long and well into the night. Gambling is absolutely prohibited, and all the players can get out of it is a soft drink on each game. Even this mild amusement will be denied everybody soon, for New Mexico has adopted a drastic anti-gambling law, which prohibits public card playing, whether it be for a glass of pop or for a row of pins.

The sanatoria try to make it pleasant for their patients; in fact, each sanatorium is a little colony in itself. It has its social functions, entertainments, and so on, which means that life isn't altogether drab and dreary there. But with the vast majority of T. B. victims it is different; nobody seems to bother their heads whether

T. B. victims seem to acquire the lemonade habit if they hit Albuquerque. Barrels and barrels of it are sold daily. And it always is ordered without ice.

Persons sent to Albuquerque by specialists in the East are always advised to consult another specialist in the T. B. community to determine the mode of life best suited to his or her particular case.

The expert first determines by a careful examination whether the patient is a sanatorium case. Then he asks what medicines you are taking. When you tell him, he says:

"Throw 'em all away; there isn't any medicinal cure for tuberculosis. Don't take anything. Do you know some of 'em come here with satchels full of cod liver oil? Doesn't do 'em a bit of good."

"What did the specialist back home tell you to eat?" is the next question.

"Besides my regular meals, he told me to drink two quarts of milk a day and to eat a raw egg in the morning and another in the afternoon," you tell him.

"Cut out the milk and raw eggs," he orders. "That will put fat on you, all right, but it won't stick."

Then he may tell the patient his condition will permit him to live in a boarding house in the city or he may decide that a boarding ranch near the city is the best place. But for weeks the patient must rest, rest and rest more, and observe the most regular habits. All walking is absolutely taboo. Perhaps in a couple of months there are indications of an "arrest" of the disease; that is, "the bugs" have been walled in, coughing has ceased, there is no fever, and the patient feels pretty good generally. He goes back to the specialist for another examination. If the germs are really imprisoned, the patient is permitted to begin walking a little. He begins with a five-minute hike in the morning and another of the same period in the afternoon. He is told to increase this five minutes for each period until he is walking an hour in the forenoon and another hour in the afternoon.

If he continues to be free of fever and the two hours' walk each day does not exhaust him, he returns for another examination, and if all things are satisfactory, the specialist orders him to increase his walking until he is hiking two hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon. If he can get away with this without inviting a temperature or exhaustion, his case may be termed well "arrested." Still, he isn't cured. That wall around "the bugs" in the lung must be made strong enough to resist the efforts of "the bugs" to break out again.

It might be supposed that the T. B. victims in Albuquerque are morose and go around with a God-forsaken appearance. Far be it from such. They are the most cheerful persons one meets, and this is the best thing in the world for them, for a cheerful, hopeful disposition is a large part of the cure or "arrest." They play their little pranks and make the best of things generally.

Reverting to the number of T. B.'s in and around Albuquerque, a striking example came up recently. A physician connected with the Rockefeller Foundation visited the city and attended a meeting of the Kiwanis Club. Something was said about tuberculosis, and he asked those of the gathering who had come to Albuquerque for their own health or to be with some member of their families who had been stricken to stand up. Of the 75 present only three remained seated.

And Albuquerque is always reaching out for more T. B. patients. Right now it is campaigning to induce the government to locate one of its proposed big sanatoria in this city. The government is to erect several such institutions in different sections of the country to care for tubercular ex-service men. Other western cities are in the race, and Utah, as a state, has come forward with a strong bid to have the sanatorium for the West located in that state, as it has a fully equipped hospital with accommodations for 1,000 patients, and offers this to the government as it stands. It is understood the state built the hospital for its soldiers during the war. The hospital gives Utah an advantage over the other contenders.



Bungalow cottages of an Albuquerque T. B. colony

they are entertained or not. They have to invent their own amusements.

Gains or losses in weight are mighty important with T. B. sufferers, and the business places of the west side have seen to it that the folks won't have to go out of their way for a weigh. There are one or two penny-in-the-slot scales on every corner and some between the blocks. Then there are real scales in some of the business places where weighs are given away.